

'Thus saith Jehovah of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and Jehovah shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.'

Zechariah 1:17.

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Theme for 2023 – The Prophecy of Zechariah

July 28th, 7pm

Subject: The Prince of Peace (chapter 9)

Speaker: Stephen A Toms

Autumn Conference – September 22nd, 4pm and 7pm

Afternoon Subject: The Shepherd of Israel (chapter 10-11)

Evening Subject: Final Conflict and Deliverance (chapter 12).

Speaker: David McMillan

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Watching and Waiting

LIGHT FOR PERILOUS TIMES

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The objects are:

1. To teach the nearing approach of our Lord's return. James 5:8
2. To hold forth the Truth and to expose and resist error. Jude 3
3. To note passing events in the light of 'the Scripture of Truth.' 2 Peter 1:19
4. To unfold the Word of God by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Acts 17:11
5. To encourage missionary endeavour, and all service for Truth. Acts 1:8
6. To comfort and strengthen those who seek to stand with the Lord, apart from abounding lawlessness. 2 Timothy 2:19
7. To call for separation from false ecumenism. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

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Evangelism in the Millennium

(Isaiah 11 and 12)

By Gordon Dane

The Bible indicates that there will be a marvellous period of one thousand years when the Lord Jesus will rule upon this earth after His coming again; and that this will be a time of glorious splendour. The thing that seems to be in the mind of most people about that day is that the wolf will dwell with the lamb and the lion will lie down with the kid and the sucking child will play on the hole of an asp, in fulfilment of the prophecy in Isaiah 11. If you were to ask the average Christian what they know about the millennium, I would say that that is one of the first things they would tell you.

However, the millennial reign of Christ is far more splendid than that. You have only to read further in that passage in Isaiah 11 to learn something about those splendours. Verse 4 speaks of the righteous rule of Christ, ‘But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.’ The most splendid thing about the millennium is that it will be a time when the Lord Jesus Christ Himself will rule; and He will rule over the whole world. There will be one kingdom and it will extend over the whole world. Psalm 72:8 tells us. ‘He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.’ Again, we read in Daniel 7:27, ‘And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.’

At the coming of the Lord Jesus, antichrist’s kingdom will be overthrown for ever, and it will never be revived, nor will antichrist and his confederates ever appear on the earth again. If you read Revelation 19:20, you will find that by this time the beast (or the antichrist) and the false prophet will have been cast into the lake of fire.

There is something more about this time when the Lord Jesus will rule upon this earth and that is the fact that the devil, who has been going about like a roaring lion seeking to devour and who has been deceiving the nations and has been living up to his name as the great deceiver, will be bound during this time.

Then we read other things – about the conversion of Israel; the fact that war will be no more (at least not until Satan is loosed again) because all swords will have been beaten into plowshares; about the Land of Israel being transformed from barrenness to beauty; and so many other wonderful things. Sometimes, when people read about all these things, they have a misconception. They think that this millennium, or thousand-year reign of Christ upon the earth, is the same thing as heaven. They get mixed up in their minds with the things that the Bible says about this wonderful earthly reign and what the Bible says about the eternal state and heaven. So, some people may well be surprised when we have been announced to speak about evangelism during the millennium. You may have thought, Will there be any need for evangelism during the millennium? Will the gospel need to be preached? Will souls be saved after the Lord has come back? Well, the answer to all those questions is ‘Yes.’

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When the Lord comes back the saints will meet the Lord in the air. Those who are dead will rise first and those who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and we will have new bodies and will be changed; but those of the Jews and the nations who will be living on the earth during the time of the millennium will just be the same as people now. People will be working, sleeping, running businesses, farming, and so on, just as they do now. They will be born the same way as people are now. In other words, they will be born in sin and will need God's salvation.

The Bible speaks about the Lord ruling with a rod of iron and that tells us that there is a need in some way to keep the rebellion of some suppressed. Zechariah 14 also tells us of those in that day who will not worship the king. So there will be evangelism during the millennium. In fact, we are going to find that it will be the most wonderful time of awakening this world has ever known. One writer I read said that the missionary activity of this present age is only preparatory. At the moment the foundations are being laid; but it is just the preparation for that day when the nations will turn to God in mighty power. Remember that you will see this. You will be there, child of God, and what we are talking about in theory you will experience first-hand – if you are saved. Because, before this time of the millennium, the saints will be raised and will be given their glorified bodies and they will meet the Lord in the air and they will come back and rule with Christ. You will see this. That is the wonderful thing and you should never forget it – if you are saved. You might think this is something that is going to happen sometime in the future but you will never see it. You will! You will be there.

So we want to have a foretaste of these wonderful events surrounding the evangelism of the millennium. Let us take some time then to get it clear in our minds what the Bible has to say about evangelism in the millennium.

1. The Conditions for Evangelism in the Millennium

Firstly, we look at the favourable conditions for evangelism during the millennial reign of Christ. We reflect on our evangelism today and we lament how difficult it is. We realise that we are in a fight against the world and the flesh and the devil. Today, we are rejoicing if we can get sinners to come to a meeting, never mind seeing them saved by the grace of God. So, I do not need to tell you that we labour against the background of many difficulties. One of the great difficulties is the power of the devil. The devil today, 'as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour.' In 2 Corinthians 4:4 we are told that 'the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.' The god of this world is the devil and he has blinded men's minds. You do not have to think far to see how minds are blinded.

You think of the recent eclipse of the sun (*this message was preached at Kilskeery many years ago – Ed.*). That is one of the greatest demonstrations in nature of the work of a designer. Did you notice how the size of the moon and the size of the sun appear exactly the same on earth even though the moon is 400 times smaller; and when there is a lunar eclipse, the shadow of the earth is exactly the size of the sun? Mathematicians have worked out the chance that three heavenly bodies would be in those exact positions by chance and they have said that it is 1 x infinity. In other words, it is impossible for

such a thing to happen by chance. Yet when you heard all the coverage of the eclipse there was not one word of the Maker and the Designer. ‘The god of this world hath blinded the minds of those who believe not.’

In the millennium, **Satan will be bound.** Turn to Revelation 20:1-3, where we read these words. ‘I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.’ So, Satan will not be there to deceive the nations. He is active now deceiving people and seeking to bring them down to a Christless eternity. He is active fighting against God’s people. He is active trying to thwart the gospel. What a blessed thing it is going to be for those who will preach the gospel in a world where the devil is bound.

The second thing is that **there will be a restored creation.** We are told that the desert will blossom like the rose and the wolf will dwell with the lamb. The physical appearance of the earth will change. We are told in Galatians 4:4 concerning the first coming of the Lord Jesus, ‘When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law.’ There was a time which was right, and it was a time when there was an almost universal language – Greek. There was political stability because of the Romans and there was easy access because of the Roman military roads; and it was a time that was right for the spread of the gospel across the world. It will be the same with this restored creation. God will bring about the conditions where the spread of the gospel will be easy.

The third thing is **the government of the world will be under the control of Christ.** His kingdom is going to be a universal kingdom. Daniel tells us that the stone cut out without hands ‘filled the whole earth’ and that Stone is Christ. Government for the first time in history is going to be righteous and just. Even though man will still be a sinner and in need of God’s salvation, social conditions will be purer. You know that many of the policies of governments today are in contradiction to the laws of God and the gospel.

The governments of this day have come to the point where they feel they can ignore God and despise God’s law. In schools and in the media the message is ‘Do your own thing. Set your own code of morals. Live life as you please.’ The gospel preacher has to combat that because the whole of society is full of it. The governments of this day are certainly no friends to the gospel; but what will it be to preach the gospel when Christ reigns! What will it be to have the very power of the state at your back and the policies emphasising what you are doing and the resources of a world government behind you! That will be wonderful. Also, there will be peace in the world, and that too will help with the spread of the gospel.

Surely the most wonderful thing is **the presence of the Lord Himself.** Psalm 2:6 says, ‘I set My king upon My holy Hill of Zion.’ Surely that will be a wonderful thing.

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2. The Character of Evangelism in the Millennium

Secondly, let us consider the character of the evangelism in the millennium. Will it be different from the evangelism we do now? Well, first of all we look at **the evangelists** in the millennium.

Remember that **the Jews** will be saved at the coming of Christ. Zechariah 12:10 says, 'I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.' That mourning is the mourning of repentance. When Israel see the Lord coming back they will see that this is their Messiah and as a nation they will turn to the Lord. As they see the Lord Jesus coming in power and great glory they will turn to Christ and be saved and enter into the millennium as a saved people ready to fulfil God's purpose for them.

What was God's purpose for Israel? It is stated in Exodus 19:6, 'Ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.' God ordained Israel to be His kingdom of priests and part of that priestly function should have been to make the Lord known to the nations. When God sent Jonah to the Gentile Ninevites, He was sending a message to Israel about their failure. God spoke to Isaiah and gave Him that message about the Messiah being a light to the Gentiles. Israel never really did live up to that proper priestly function but, in the millennium, they will. They will then truly be a nation of priests and part of that priestly function will be to make known the gospel. They will be God's preachers in the millennium. They will be God's evangelists. You see, God's plans do not fail. God said that while sun and moon remained, His covenant with Israel would not fail, and it has not and will not; and God's plan for Israel to be a kingdom of priests will not fail either. They will be God's priests and God's preachers in the coming kingdom of Christ.

Now let me show you what the Word of God says about this because it is one thing for me to state all this, but what we need to do is see what the Bible says. Psalm 9:11 says, 'Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people His doings.' Notice carefully the words that are used there. They are to declare the doings of the Lord, who dwells in Zion. When will He dwell in Zion? In the millennium. Turn to Isaiah 12:4, 'In that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon His Name, declare His doings among the people, make mention that His Name is exalted.' It says that they will declare His doings among the people and make mention that His Name is exalted. Notice when they will do that. The text says that it will be 'In that day.' What day? Well, you know that the chapter divisions in the Bible are not inspired. They were only put there as a convenient way to find a text. So, look back to chapter 11 to see what day this is in which these people will make mention of the Name of the Lord. It is the same day in which the wolf will dwell with the lamb and the leopard will lie down with the kid. It is the day of the millennium. It is in that day they will declare God's doings among the people. Now that is evangelism. What do we do when we preach the gospel? We declare God's doings. We declare the doings of God when He sent His Son and when He died there on the cross for a propitiation of our sins.

In Zechariah 8:20-23, we have a very remarkable passage, ‘Thus saith the LORD of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.’ What is happening here? The Bible indicates that the Lord will set up His earthly rule in Jerusalem and Zion, and that is what the Psalmist says in Psalm 9 when he speaks of declaring among the people the doings of the Lord that dwelleth in Zion. The Bible also indicates that in this millennium there will be a restored temple and there will be restored sacrifices, as we are told in Ezekiel. Now those offerings will be of a commemorative nature. We see the children of Israel becoming a kingdom of priests; and in the millennium, the nation of Israel will be peculiarly blessed.

Deuteronomy 14:2 says, ‘For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.’ It is true that in the millennial days, many from all nations will be blessed but Israel will be God’s peculiar people; and what is happening here in Zechariah 8 is that when the nations see the blessing of the Lord upon Israel, they will run to Jerusalem and they will take hold of the Jews and they will say, ‘We will go with you. We want to be part of this with you. We want God’s blessings too.’ Now think of that. You think of all the bother to which we have to go today to reach people with the gospel. It is not very often that we get people coming to us uninvited. We need to have leaflets and tracts printed, and we need to go and knock doors and organise missions; and even when we do that nowadays we are glad if we get a handful of people to listen to us; but look at this. People will come from all over the world and make their way to Jerusalem and will go to the Jews and say ‘We want what you have.’ We have the Jews as God’s kingdom of priests and they are declaring among the people the doings of God. Remember that Satan is bound and he is not deceiving the people.

We read in Micah 4 and Isaiah 2, ‘In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for the Law shall go forth of Zion, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem.’ The Law and the Word of the Lord will go forth from Zion and the Jews, as a nation of priests, God’s people, will preach it. It says that the people will flow to it. These are people going to Jerusalem to be taught in the ways of God. Multitudes will be coming to Christ. Mr B W Newton called this, ‘the great harvest-time of the earth.’ Surely this is a mighty time of awakening.

Of course, I think it is fair to assume that the Gentiles who are saved now will also be fired with evangelistic zeal and when they go home, they will proclaim the gospel.

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Indeed, Isaiah 66:18-19 seems to indicate this, ‘For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see My glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard My fame, neither have seen My glory; and they shall declare My glory among the Gentiles.’ So those that are saved then, begin to witness and they go to the uttermost parts of the world to those who have not yet heard. It speaks here of the isles afar off. So, there will be missionaries going through the world even to the most remote isles and they will be telling the people of the things of God.

Remember that the greatest factor in all this is **the personal presence of Christ**. As all Israel look to Him and will mourn, so too will many among the Gentiles. Zephaniah 3: 9, ‘For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve Him with one consent.’ What a day! What a harvest! Remember if you are saved, you will be able to see it.

3. The Contents of Evangelism in the Millennium

I want you to notice the contents of evangelism in the millennium. What is it they preach? What is it that they witness about? Look at Isaiah 43:10-12 and you will see that the Lord is talking to Israel. He says, ‘Ye are My witnesses, saith the LORD, and My servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside Me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are My witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God.’ The Lord says to the house of Israel, ‘Ye are my witnesses.’ He says, ‘I want you to declare the former things.’

Notice what they are declaring. ‘I, even I, am the LORD; and beside Me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are My witnesses, saith the LORD, that I am God.’ So they are **preaching about a Saviour**. In other words they are preaching the same gospel that we preach.

There have been those who have said that the gospel preached in the millennium will be a different gospel. There have been those who have suggested that, in the millennium, salvation will be by legal obligation. They suggest that there are a number of gospels; and that today we have the gospel of grace but the gospel that John the Baptist preached was a different gospel. It was the gospel of the kingdom and it was the good news that God had promised to set up an earthly kingdom; and when the millennium comes this kingdom gospel is what will be preached again and people will be saved by obeying the law.

However, I want to tell you that there is only one gospel. The message that will be preached in the millennial age is the same message as Paul and the apostles preached. There are not two gospels or four gospels but there is only one way of salvation; and that is by trusting in the merits of the saving work of Christ on the cross of Calvary.

Look at Jeremiah 16:19. It says ‘O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto Thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.’ What is that? That is repentance! Men are saved by repentance and by a turning away from their old ways and trusting in Christ. That is the way that you must be saved today and that is the way that men will be saved in the millennium. They are saved by grace.

In Isaiah 25:9 we have another indication of what they will say. ‘It shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.’ They will say, ‘This is our God ... He will save us.’ If you do not know Him, He is willing to save you too.

4. The Carelessness towards Evangelism in the Millennium

There is one more thing that I want you to see and that is the carelessness toward evangelism in the millennium. We have this wonderful picture of people going from all over the world to Jerusalem and of the message of salvation being preached; but I want you to see this. Look at Revelation 20:7-8, ‘And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.’ We said that during the millennium, Satan will be bound but here we learn that at the end of the millennium, Satan is going to be loosed again for a little season; and when he is loosed he is going to do his old job of deceiving the nations. He will gather a great army in rebellion against the rule of the Lord; and this great army will come to compass Jerusalem and the camp of the saints. However, what I want you to notice now is the number involved. It says, ‘And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.’ They will be as the sand of the sea.

Now you ask, from where do all these rebels come? We have had a thousand years of perfect government. We have had a thousand years in which Satan has been bound and has not been deceiving the nations. We have had a thousand years in which people have flowed to Jerusalem and have worshipped the Lord. Where do all these rebels come from? Well, we know that during the millennium, the Lord has had to rule with a rod of iron. There are those, even in this perfect environment, who will not worship the Lord. Zechariah 14 speaks of those who will not come to worship and obviously at the end of the millennium there are enough that will be deceived by Satan that they are said to be as the sand of the sea.

You know that even when the Lord Jesus was upon earth there were those who rejected Him and would not listen to Him. We think of the scribes and the Pharisees, who hated Him, even when He was doing good. We also think of the rich young ruler who wanted to know how he might obtain eternal life and was a good moral young man, but when the Lord told him to sell all that he had and give to the poor he would not do it. The

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Bible says that he went away sorrowful; but, at the same time, he went away. And even in this perfect millennial government, with Satan bound, such is the sinful heart of man that there will be many who will reject Christ and rise up in rebellion against Him; but I want you to see their end. The Lord gathers them all together at Jerusalem; and as they surround the city and the camp of the saints, fire comes out and consumes the whole lot. Then shortly after, hell is cast into the lake of fire; and that is the end of all who reject Christ.

You know, people say that if the Lord came and spoke to me, I would believe. Not a bit of it. Even when the Lord was on earth there were those who would not believe. When He was on earth before, there were many who would not believe. If you are not saved, you need to stop being careless. The Bible says, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.'

Even in these wonderful conditions there are those who will reject; but remember where they end up when they reject.

But look at this wonderful time. Think of the multitudes that will be saved. Think of men coming from the ends of the earth to seek the Lord. It will be wonderful to see. In some ways, we are laying the foundations for it now. We may not have the success that they will have in the millennium but surely even thinking of this encourages us to be faithful now. Perhaps those in the millennium will look back and rejoice over those who, in difficult and hard days, were faithful to the Lord. We are preaching the same message as they will. Let us preach with all our hearts.

The Gospel of the Grace of God

By Dr Cecil Yates Biss

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(Continued from page 156).

The application of these facts to the preaching of the Gospel is a matter of the deepest importance. What the responsibilities of a sinner under the preaching of the Gospel are, have already been shown. We may now consider what are the terms in which the invitations of the Gospel should be proclaimed to sinners. It is often said that the invitations of the Gospel are free, free as the air we breathe, free as the boundless mercy of God can make them: and this is true within the limits in which the Scripture itself sets them. For, if the invitations and promises of the Gospel are examined, it will be found, in every case, that they are so worded as to indicate those to whom they are addressed. They are not only addressed to sinners, but they are addressed to sinners of a certain character, that is, these promises indicate the classes of persons to whom they speak by certain spiritual features which distinguish them from others.

Let a few such texts be examined: 'Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters,

and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price' (Isaiah 55:1). Here, 'everyone that **thirsteth**,' 'he that hath no money,' are the persons addressed, and no others. 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' (Matthew 11:28). They who 'labour' and are 'heavy laden' are alone invited, and to these alone is rest promised. 'Men and brethren, through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all who believe are justified from all things' (Acts 13:38-39). Here there is only the simple declaration that faith in Jesus brings to the believing one the forgiveness of sins. And even the blessed words, than which none could be more blessed, more simple, nor more full, which close the revelation of God, 'The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely' (Revelation 22:17), are words which, while they express with perfect liberality of grace the blessed invitations of the Gospel of Grace, clearly distinguish those to whom the invitations of that Gospel are declared: not to all men, whether they hear or hear not, but to 'him that heareth' is the invitation given: not to all men, careless or otherwise, but only to 'him that is athirst' is the word 'come' addressed: not to those who will not, but to 'whosoever will' is the invitation given to 'take the water of life freely.'

It would appear, therefore, that the invitations of the Gospel are not to be addressed to men indiscriminately, but to those who present in some measure at least, the characteristics indicated in such verses as these. If souls quail under the solemn testimony of the righteousness of God, and the tidings of a judgment to come – if men, pricked in their hearts, cry out 'what shall we do?' – our answer must be 'repent and believe,' as the apostles themselves in the like circumstances said (Acts 2:38). If a sinner, convinced of sin, and feeling his own utter helplessness to avert its penalties, cries out, in the bitterness of his soul, 'What shall I do to be saved?' our answer must be, as Paul's was in the like circumstances, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved' (Acts 16:31). In such cases the cry of the heart, the question of the lips, is the clear indication that the Spirit of God has granted conviction of sin, and has placed the soul in a humble and receptive attitude before God; and this is the warrant to us for proclaiming the invitations fitted to such a case.

One of our hymns, which has long and deservedly been a great favourite with all preachers of the Gospel, expresses this truth in apt and beautiful words – 'Let not conscience make you linger; nor of fitness fondly dream; all the fitness He requireth is to feel your need of Him. This He gives you. 'Tis the Spirit's rising beam.'

Though it is painful to comment upon mistakes, especially when it is remembered that such mistakes are not realised as mistakes by those who have made them, and that the words used are uttered with the best possible intention, yet truth and faithfulness require that such mistakes should be pointed out. Truth must be spoken, though it should be spoken in love.

But in the preaching of the Gospel to mixed multitudes we must be careful, if, as obedient servants, we would seek duly to preserve the harmony and integrity of divine truth when delivering God's message to men, to distinguish between a manner of

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presenting promises and invitations which would make them unlimited and universal, and that manner in which the Scripture has been shown to present them. We are not commissioned to say to all men indiscriminately – men of whom we have no knowledge, and of whose spiritual condition we have no intimation – ‘Come to Christ,’ ‘receive Christ now and you shall be saved,’ ‘He waits to save you,’ ‘He stands knocking at the door of your heart,’ ‘If you admit Him He will come in and abide with you: if you refuse Him, He will depart leaving you unsaved.’

It must, then, be remembered that the use of the above phrase as a gospel appeal is wholly unauthorised by Scripture, and is indeed a contravention of the real meaning of the metaphor as employed in Scripture. The words ‘Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me’ (Revelation 3:20), are the words of our Lord to His Church at Laodicea, and they describe His relation to His erring people, and not to sinners without the fold. To make use of them, therefore, in Gospel preaching addressed to the unconverted is unwarrantable; nor is it likely that such an error would ever have come into vogue unless the Church at large had so wholly lost its separateness from the world that the distinction between converted and unconverted persons within its communion is either but faintly realised, or else not recognised at all.

Open perhaps to still stronger objection is that form of preaching which makes prominent use of the idea of decision – ‘Decide for Christ,’ ‘Enlist under the banner of Christ,’ ‘Take up your cross and follow Christ,’ and the like phraseology, all of which implies that it is the choice of the sinner’s will that determines that sinner’s salvation, and tends even still further to hide from view the fact that faith – the trust of the soul in Christ, and not the choosing of Christ or the following of Christ – is the one and only link between the soul and salvation. If we preach so as to convey to men the impression that their will is sufficient by itself to enable them to distinguish and to choose rightly in the matter of salvation, we contradict the words of Scripture which declare ‘that there is none that understandeth and none that seeketh after God;’ and we give them the impression that so far from their case being helpless and hopeless as regards themselves, they have within themselves, if they did but seek it, a power of rectification which – with or without divine help – is sufficient to amend their case.

Grave objection must also be taken to the manner in which the Atonement is often presented to the unsaved. How often statements such as the following are made: ‘Christ has borne all your sins. He has taken them all away. They are all blotted out by the Blood of the Cross. You have but to believe this and you are saved.’ Can it be gravely maintained that these statements when made indiscriminately to a congregation which the preacher assumes to be composed largely of unconverted persons, are true? Is it true that the atoning Blood has blotted out finally and for ever the sins of all unbelieving men alike? If so, would they not all be saved? Could such a preacher dare to face the issue that is capable of being raised by a scoffer if he made rejoinder that seeing his sin was blotted out he had nothing to fear? Could the reply be made that unbelief, and unbelief alone, would yet become the ground of everlasting condemnation, even though the record of every other sin had been cancelled by the Saviour’s death? It were well

indeed that many evangelical preachers should ponder the perplexity into which thoughtful souls might be plunged, and the false confidences under which thoughtless souls might easily shelter themselves, if misled by statements like these.

Then again with regard to the nature of faith, is it not needful that it should be more clearly defined in the preaching of the Gospel what is the nature and object of faith; that faith is RELIANCE, and reliance only, upon the substitutional work of the Lord Jesus, even as the offerer, in Leviticus 1, leaned his hand upon the head of his offering as he presented it to God, expressing thereby his complete reliance upon its substitutional perfectness in life and in death? But is it not often said that saving faith is to believe that we are saved, that to believe the message simply as a credible fact is to believe unto everlasting life, forgetting that it is quite possible for persons to believe the facts of the Gospel, even as it is certain that the devils believe them, without being able in any way to connect themselves therewith so as to make use of these truths as the means of salvation? Surely the words 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' do not mean the mere belief of historical facts concerning Christ, His person, His death, and His resurrection, but that the sinner should, under the instruction of the Spirit of God, turn from all other hopes and confidences and build his trust upon the Saviour's atoning death as his one hope before God.

Such was not the manner of the preaching of the apostles, nor do these methods accord with the doctrinal facts of the case. We must be careful rather to preach first the solemnities of the Gospel, its calls to repentance, and its warnings; and then to explain to all who are humbled, repentant, contrite, to all who are seeking deliverance from sin, to all who are thirsting after the provisions of grace, to all who are willing to receive free forgiveness for the sake of Christ – that to all such there is addressed a full invitation to come to Him, and that to such is given the assurance: 'Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.' This will not hinder the proclamation of the Grace of God; it will not hinder the most ample desire of any heart to bring the grace of God to his fellow men: but it will at the same time, preserve the integrity of the Gospel; keep man in his right place; uphold the glory of God; and prevent the possibility of sinners mistaking their real condition before God. Doubtless under the popular methods of preaching, persons often go away saying to themselves, 'The preacher says I can come if I like, I may come when I like: I do not feel inclined to come today, but I think I may tomorrow. I will leave it over, for I can close with the overtures of grace whenever I choose.'

How solemn the responsibility of so preaching as to convey to men the thought that their own will, and nothing but their own will, is the determining agency in the work of salvation; and how painful is the reflection that even when we are seeking to serve God and the interests of men, we may, if unguided by truth, hinder that service and injure those interests, and – most painful of all – so speak as to grieve and dishonour that Blessed One whom we seek to glorify. It were well that we should remember that human wisdom in its various reasonings can never be a competent guide in the service of God; and that, seeing His thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor His ways as our ways, we can only be led to a safe path by the guidance of God's revealed truth in the full

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harmony of its doctrinal teachings, as well as by the statements of individual texts of Scripture.

Humility then, and continual dependence upon God, should be the constant attitude of him who would serve God. Solemn are the truths that we minister – solemn the thought that these truths are connected with the everlasting destinies of men. We have to remember as we preach the Gospel that we are delivering the message of the Living God, and that it is written, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me,’ so that the servant sinks into insignificance behind the personality of the Master. Let us seek then, that that Master’s approval may rest upon all our work, and that He may confirm all the words of our testimony.

There is one of whom it is recorded in Scripture that he was ‘approved in Christ.’ We, too, may seek for a like gracious approval of our service; although regarding that service, even in its holiest and most successful moments, we must ever be constrained to say, ‘Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O LORD, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.’

Millennial Ritual

A Note on Ezekiel 27:25-29

By John Hunt Lynn

(Taken from ‘Watching and Waiting,’ October, 1933).

Verse 26: ‘Sanctuary’ points to the future Temple; but not ‘Tabernacle’ of verse 27. The word for Tabernacle occurs twice only in Ezekiel, here and 25:4 rendered ‘dwelling.’ All the other occurrences of this word in the prophets are: Isaiah 22:16; 54:2, rendered ‘habitation,’ Isaiah 32:18, Jeremiah 9:19; 30:18; 51:30; Ezekiel 25:4; Habakkuk 1:6; rendered ‘dwelling.’ If in Ezekiel 37:27, this rendering were given all the nine passages would accord, reminding, say, of Psalm 91:1,3 and Matthew 23:37, deleting the last four words; for Ezekiel 37:27 will exactly fulfil this curtailed utterance.

The preposition in this verse is ‘over.’ Regardless of the English idiom, the literal translation is: ‘And SHALL BE My Dwelling over them.’ The inexpressibly delightful introduction of the word ‘dwell’ was on the Grace side of Eden (Genesis 3).

So far from the Temple services of Ezekiel 41 conflicting with the Epistle to the Hebrews, they emphatically confirm that Epistle and carry forward its testimonies in Millennial triumph. Atoning efficacy was not in pre-Calvary rites, but only adumbrated by them. In the Millennial Temple they will, in wonderfully fit and manifold action, memorialise what the crucifixion effected!

Doubt seems to be in some minds as to the phrase ‘My servant David,’ meaning the Messiah. The Lord Jesus is called David seven times in the prophets, and twice in the

Covenant Psalm; also My Servant several times, not the least significant being in reference to the final gathering of Israel, and world-wide Salvation.

Moreover our Lord is called in Daniel 9:25, ‘Messiah the Prince,’ and the same Hebrew word in Isaiah 55:4,5 is rendered ‘leader,’ in relation to the call of Israel in the coming age, and also of the Gentiles.

Called Home

Mr David John Field was called home on 19th February, 2023, age 77. Born in Southport, Lancs, he became the adopted son of John and Hilda Field. Later in life, when he lived in the Midlands, he attended ‘Hope’ Chapel, Sedgley for a while. Subsequently, he felt led go to the Coppice Chapel; that was in March, 1990. He came under conviction of sin in 1992 and was brought to seek refuge in the Saviour of sinners. In November, 1993, he was called to the ministry and in February, 1997 he accepted the invitation to become the pastor at the Coppice; and he has diligently served the Lord there until the time of his passing. He affirmed his belief in the truth held by the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony and has occasionally preached at our meetings.

Question and Answer: (*Taken from ‘Watching and Waiting,’ October, 1932*)

Q: The Union of the two nations as in Ezekiel 37:15-24. At what time is the prophecy fulfilled?

A: Continue reading to the end of the chapter. With verses 23 and 27 compare Jeremiah 31:1. See Isaiah 59:20-21; Romans 11:25,27 and Jeremiah 31:31-37. These conditions were not effected in the days of Ezra, Nehemiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah and Zechariah; nor in the days of the Maccabees, nor in those of ‘the Son of Man.’ All Israel is still scattered and peeled. The time is announced in Jeremiah 50:4 and Zephaniah 3:14-20; ‘At that time will I bring you, even in the time that I gather you; for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD.’ (*John Hunt Lynn*).

England’s Well-Being: ‘My wish is that men may write on their hearts that the well-being of England depends not on commerce, or clever politicians, or steam, or armies, or navies, or gold, or iron, or coal, or corn; but on the maintenance of the principles of the English Reformation.’ (*Bishop J C Ryle, D.D.*)

Earthquakes: Following an earthquake in Turkey at the time, Watching and Waiting for May, 1970 had this interesting comment: ‘Our Lord’s teaching is that the recent earthquake does not necessarily mean that the inhabitants of Turkey were ‘sinners above all others.’ Nor are such calamities signs of the immediate end. They are ‘birth-pangs’ of this sin cursed earth, longing to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Doubtless these struggling agonies will increase in frequency and intensity as the end

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draws near. Our Lord taught His disciples very plainly that wars and rumours of wars amongst the nations would continue, that a falling away and betrayals would be seen amongst professed Christians, and the judgments from the hand of God would also interfere in earthquakes and famines, until the Lord shall come. The prevalence of these judgments **ought** to lead to repentance, but alas, they often lead to blasphemy. It will be so to the end as Revelation 16:9 indicates. ‘They repented not to give God the glory.’ This is what is to come to pass in the near future, but men are the same now. Nothing seems to awaken, to sober, and to humble the human race in its mad rush for wealth, position, pleasure, and prominence. Earthquakes, famines, pestilences increase in ‘divers places,’ but the Mount of Olives has not yet been cleft asunder, nor has Great Babylon come in remembrance for judgement by fire, sword, and earthquake. We must wait with patience.’

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: Legislation came into force in May, 2018 regarding information kept on database. We confirm that the record we hold of names and addresses of our friends is NOT passed to any third party but is merely used to send ‘Watching and Waiting’ and occasionally other small items of literature. Should any friend wish us to delete their details from our records, kindly let us know and that will mean that you will not be sent the magazine, etc.

Bible Spreading Union: The 129th Annual Meeting of the Bible Spreading Union will be held, God willing, at 7.30.pm on Tuesday, 12th September, 2023 at Grace Baptist Chapel, Napier Road, Tottenham, N17 6XX. The preacher engaged to preach is Mr Philip Knowles. Your support for this meeting will be much appreciated. We would remind friends that the reports and annual meeting messages for earlier years have been bound and the latest two volumes (1990 – 1999 and 2000 – 2020) are still available at £9 each or £15 the two.

S.G.A.T. Meetings: Arrangements have been made, God willing, for meetings of the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony to continue through 2023, with the theme ‘The Prophecy of Zechariah.’ We trust that friends will be interested in this illuminating Book, and we would like to see others come to our meetings, which we expect to hold on the fourth Friday of each month except August and December. The Autumn Conference is in September, when we have an afternoon meeting at 4.pm. in addition to the usual evening meeting. All evening meetings are at 7.pm. Details of the meetings for this Quarter are given on the back page but so that you can insert the dates for the remainder of the meetings in your diary and arrange to be present, we give particulars which are as follows, subject to the will of the Lord:

October 27.....The Open Fountain and the Smitten Shepherd (chapter 13)

....Richard Monteith

November 24....The Second Coming of Christ and the Millennial Kingdom
(chapter 14) Paul Toms